

under that name, it is much better to retain for the present bird the appropriate designation which Mr. Salvin has applied to it.

Mr. White's specimens from the Argentine Republic (*C. viridis*, White, P. Z. S. 1882, p. 595) belong to this species.

9. *CYCLORHIS NIGRIROSTRIS*, Lafr.

Of this very distinct Colombian species there are examples in the British Museum from Bogotá and Antioquia (*Salmon*).

10. *CYCLORHIS ATRIROSTRIS*, sp. nov. (Plate X.)

Suprà lætè viridis, superciliis latis castanco mixtis et pileo reliquo hoc colore adumbrato : subtùs cinereus ; pectore et lateribus viridi tinctis : subalaribus et remigum paginâ interiore sulphureo-flavis : rostro toto nigro, pedibus obscurè carneis. Long. tota 6, alæ 3·2, caudæ 2·5.

Hab. Æquatoria.

The single specimen of this bird in the British Museum, formerly in the collection of Messrs. Salvin and Godman, was obtained by Buckley in Ecuador. It is not quite mature, but appears to belong to a species closely allied to *C. nigrirostris*, and with the same form of bill, but without the light colour at the base of the lower mandible. The large and lengthened superciliaries also at once distinguish it from *C. nigrirostris*, in which they only extend just to the back of the eye.

XXXIV.—*Notes on a Collection of Birds from Kroonstad, in the Orange Free State.* By EDMOND SYMONDS. (Communicated by J. H. GURNEY.)

[MR. SYMONDS has sent me specimens of the birds to which his notes refer (except where the reverse is mentioned), and I have carefully identified them.—J. H. G.]

1. *HELOTARSUS ECAUDATUS* (Daud.). Rufous-backed Bateleur Eagle.

There are always two or three pairs of these Eagles on a farm about six miles from Kroonstad, where there is thick bush ; they are very shy and difficult to get at ; the Boers say they do no harm to poultry or lambs.



Hanharu ang

CYCLOPHIS AIRIPETUS

2. *CIRCUS MACRURUS* (Gmel.). Pallid Harrier.

This Harrier is common throughout this district during our summer, but disappears in winter; they seem very partial to locusts, and all the specimens I have had contained locusts and grasshoppers in their crops.

3. *CIRCUS CINERACEUS* (Mont.). Montagu's Harrier.

This species is rarer here than the preceding one.

4. *NISAËTUS BELLICOSUS* (Daud.). Martial Hawk Eagle.

Male, immature; iris brown.

This specimen was found in the nest 20th September, 1885, and was kept alive till 15th February, 1886. The nest was in a mimosa tree about four miles from Kroonstad, and overhung the river; it was easily accessible and was formed of sticks, apparently from the mimosa trees; it must have measured from four to five feet in diameter. The young bird which the nest contained was all covered with white down. I watched the nest carefully for about six weeks to try to get the old birds, but in spite of all my attempts to hide myself within shot, and although there were many other trees and bushes close by, they always saw me and turned off to some other tree, where they sat and watched until I left; I even tried by moonlight, but never got a chance. On one occasion one of the old birds came so near that I could see a full-grown hare in its claws, but it swerved off just as I was going to shoot.

On the edge of the nest and on the ground close to it were skulls and bones of hares and meer-cats (*Suricata tetradactyla*).

When the young bird was almost ready to fly I took him home and my wife reared him; he sulked for a few days, and raw meat had to be pushed down his throat, but after about a week he took his food well, and eventually he became so far tame as to let my wife go into his cage (a good large one) and scratch his head, which he seemed to enjoy. When he was about to be fed he would erect his crest and half open his wings, giving vent to a low whistle; his eyes being large

and most brilliant, he looked very grand and handsome in this position.

My wife left home for about a month, and when she returned the Eagle had forgotten her, and it was no longer safe to go into his cage; for on entering it he would slightly erect his crest, open his wings, throwing his weight upon one leg, and on attempting to touch him he would strike out with one foot with great rapidity.

Unfortunately the hot summer was too much for him, and notwithstanding all my efforts in keeping his place cool and in diminishing his supply of meat, he had a succession of apoplectic fits, which increased in frequency till, much to my regret, I had to put him out of his misery.

The old birds are still about here, but I had no time to look for their nest this year, and they did not use the old one: they are most destructive to young lambs, which they kill by coming down upon them with tremendous rapidity, and striking the formidable hind claw into the lamb, they rip it completely open, and then either eat it or carry it away; they are very difficult birds to get at to shoot, but the farmers sometimes manage to poison them, and say that strychnine is very fatal to them in very small doses.

5. *BUTEO DESERTORUM* (Daud.). Desert Buzzard.

This Buzzard is not uncommon about Kroonstad, but I have never noticed it during our winter months; it is said to be very destructive to chickens.

6. *TINNUNCULUS RUPICOLA* (Daud.). Lesser South-African Kestrel.

These Kestrels are plentiful here; a pair have built yearly for the last four or five years in an inaccessible situation on the Dutch church in Kroonstad.

7. *TINNUNCULUS RUPICOLOIDES* (Smith). Greater South-African Kestrel.

The specimen sent is the only one I have shot here, and I have but very seldom noticed any others.

8. *ELANUS CÆRULEUS* (Desf.). Black-shouldered Kite.

I have only seen one specimen here; it was shot in the month of August.

9. *MELIERAX GABAR* (Daud.). Gabar Hawk.

I have not seen many of this species here.

10. *CAPRIMULGUS RUFIGENA*, Smith. Rufous-cheeked Nightjar.

This species is very common here, and I think perhaps remains through the winter, as I saw two in the latter part of June 1885.

11. *CAPRIMULGUS MOSSAMBICUS*, Peters. Mozambique Nightjar.

The specimen was shot in the willow trees near the river at Kroonstad.

[This is the most southern example of the species that has come under my notice.—J. H. G.]

12. *CORACIAS GARRULA*, Linn. European Roller.

This Roller is not uncommon in the bush by the river, but is very shy and difficult to get a shot at.

13. *CORACIAS NÆVIA*, Daud. White-naped Roller.

The specimen sent was shot in the bush by the river about five miles from Kroonstad, and is the only one I have seen here. When first killed it had a beautiful shining appearance, like shot silk, somewhat of a green and blue colour, but this subsequently faded; the head is crested.

14. *CORYTHORNIS CYANOSTIGMA* (Rüpp.). Malachite-crested Kingfisher.

These Kingfishers are very common in summer on the banks of the Valsch River, but I have not seen them in winter.

15. *CERYLE RUDIS* (Linn.). Pied Kingfisher.

This species is also very common on the same river; the white on the throat shines like satin.

16. *CERYLE MAXIMA* (Pall.). Great African Kingfisher.
Female, shot 17th August.

There is nearly always a pair of these Kingfishers on the river within the town of Kroonstad, and there is a large flat stone just in the water at the bathing-place, where they may be seen in the early morning killing crabs, or perhaps breaking their shells by beating them vigorously on the stone; the stomach of the specimen sent contained a whole crab with the shell broken in pieces, and the oviduct contained eggs that would have been laid in a few days.

17. *UPUPA AFRICANA*, Bechst. South-African Hoopoe.

This species builds here every year; it is very common and very tame.

18. *RHINOPOMASTES CYANOMELAS* (Vieill.). Scimitar-billed Wood Hoopoe.

These birds are rather plentiful in the bush along the river.

19. *CHRYSOCOCCYX CUPREUS* (Bodd.). Didric Cuckoo.

This Cuckoo is very common here, arriving in October and departing in March.

In the summer of 1884-85 some Sparrows built a nest and reared their young in a hole under the eaves of my house; they had laid for a second time, when one day my wife told me our Sparrows had been very noisy and in a great state over something, but we forgot it till on a subsequent day my wife again called my attention to a queer-looking bird in the Sparrow's nest which the Sparrows were feeding, and which, on getting up to the nest, I found to be a young Golden Cuckoo ready to fly.

[Mr. Symonds has sent this young Cuckoo, which was taken from the nest in the month of January; the upper portions of its plumage resemble those of the adult male, except that it is without any tinge of copper-colour on the back, and the white markings on the sides and centre of the pileum are less developed; the last-named white mark is, however, a variable character in the adult birds. On the under surface the white plumage is profusely intermingled with dark metallic-green spots, which on the flanks assume the form of transverse bars, and on the cheeks of longitudinal

lines; all these markings, except those on the flanks, are absent in the adults.

The bill is orange-red in this nestling and in other very young specimens that I have seen, whilst in the adult birds it is black on the upper and dusky on the under mandible.

I have four young specimens but little older than that sent by Mr. Symonds, of which one (a male) closely resembles the Kroonstad specimen, but the other three, of which two are males and one a female, are more or less hepatic on the head, back, wings, and tail; these four specimens were dissected and sexed by Mr. Thomas Ayres.—J. H. G.]

20. *COCCYSTES GLANDARIUS* (Linn.). Great Spotted Cuckoo.

These Cuckoos are very common in Kroonstad in our summer, but are not seen in winter. In the early summer months the males seem to chase each other about, making a great chattering scolding sort of noise; this performance becomes less as Christmas gets nearer, and I have never heard it after the new year. They are very cunning birds, hiding themselves in the thickest part of a tree, to which they let you get close up and then slip away, taking good care that the tree is between you and them till they are a fair distance off.

[Of three specimens sent by Mr. Symonds, one was shot the 28th November, the others, one in December and one in January.—J. H. G.]

21. *COCCYSTES JACOBINUS* (Bodd.). Black-and-white Cuckoo.

The specimen sent and one other are all that I have seen of this species here.

22. *POGONORHYNCHUS LEUCOMELAS* (Dum.). Pied Barbet.

This species is fairly common here, but I do not send a specimen. The Black-collared Barbet (*P. torquatus*) I have never seen in the Free State; but I met with quite a flock of them on the Yokeskey River, Transvaal, about five hours south of Pretoria; they were particularly noisy.

23. *GEOCOLAPTES OLIVACEUS* (Lath.). Ground Woodpecker.

I have only seen these birds on one farm in this district, where the bush is extensive, the banks being high and of a kind of soil on which no grass grows. I observed quite a number of these Woodpeckers sitting on the mimosa trees, chattering and making a great noise.

24. *DENDROPICUS CARDINALIS* (Gmel.). Cardinal Woodpecker.

This species is common in the mimosa bush along the river.

25. *GEOCICHLA LITSITSIRUPA* (Smith). Ground-scraper Thrush.

This species is common here. I found its nest on a mimosa tree, built very much as the Missel Thrush builds at home.

26. *TURDUS OLIVACEUS*, Linn. Olivaceous Thrush.

These Thrushes are commonly seen hopping about under the trees in the bush.

27. *PRINIA FLAVICANS* (Bonn. & V.). Black-chested Grass Warbler.

These birds are very common in the gardens here; one pair builds yearly in a mulberry-tree a round oblong nest, with a dome on the top and an entrance at one side, of fine grass beautifully twisted and woven.

28. *NECTARINIA FAMOSA* (Linn.). Malachite Sun-bird.

These beautiful little birds are common in the town of Bethlehem (Orange Free State) all through the summer, but I have never seen them at Kroonstad. Bethlehem is much colder than this district, and as it is nearer the mountains (Wittebergen) it has perhaps a greater rainfall, and flowers may be more plentiful, but there is no bush near it.

29. *LANIUS MINOR* (Gmel.). Lesser Grey Shrike.

The specimen sent is the only one I have seen here, an adult female, shot 24th March.

30. *LANIUS COLLARIS*, Linn. Fiskal Shrike.

This Shrike is common here.

31. *UROLESTES MELANOLEUCUS* (Jard. & Selby). South-African Long-tailed Shrike.

This species is occasionally seen in pairs in the bush by the river.

32. *LANIARIUS GUTTURALIS* (Müll.). Bacbakiri Bush Shrike.

A few pairs of these birds are always to be seen or heard about here, except in winter, when they disappear; in the dry years 1883, 1884, and 1885 they seemed to be very scarce.

33. *BRADYORNIS SILENS* (Shaw). Pied Wood Shrike.

This species is common all about the town of Kroonstad and the neighbouring bush.

34. *BUCHANGA ASSIMILIS* (Bechst.). African Drongo.

Isolated pairs of this species are seen here occasionally.

35. *LAMPROTORNIS AUSTRALIS*, Smith. Burchell's Grakle.

These birds are very shy and cunning. I have occasionally seen a few pairs of them on a farm about nine miles from Kroonstad, where there is plenty of unfrequented bush near the river.

36. *LAMPROTORNIS PHENICOPTERUS*, Swains. Flame-shouldered Grakle.

This species is common here in pairs.

37. *SPREO BICOLOR* (Gmel.). White-rumped Grakle.

These birds are very numerous here.

[Mr. Symonds did not forward specimens of this and the preceding species.—J. H. G.]

38. *SPOROPIPES SQUAMIFRONS* (Smith). Scutellated Finch.

These Finches are plentiful here, and in winter go in flocks with other *Estreldæ*; they become very tame in confinement.

39. *VIDUA PRINCIPALIS* (Linn.). Dominican Widow-bird.

This is a common species all about here.

40. *COLIUSPASSER PROCNE* (Bodd.). Long-tailed Widow-bird.

These birds are common in all this district and are very destructive on corn-lands.

41. *PYROMELANA ORYX* (Linn.). Southern Red Bishop-bird.

This is also a very common species here.

42. *QUELEA LATHAMI* (Smith). Latham's Weaver-bird.

These little birds seem to be particularly fond of the town of Kroonstad, which they frequent in large numbers. I have several in my aviary, and observe that in summer, when the males get their red colour about the head, the bills of the females turn yellow.

43. *AMADINA ERYTHROCEPHALA* (Linn.). Red-headed Weaver-bird.

I saw these birds for the first time in May 1885, and had two in confinement, but they unfortunately died. I have never seen them in our summer months. I think a pair built on a Eucalyptus tree in Kroonstad in July 1886, as I saw them on several occasions going to a nest in the tree with grass and feathers, and was quite close enough to see them plainly. I did not disturb them, hoping to get the young ones, but I left home for a few weeks, and on my return the birds were gone; the nest had droppings &c. round it and the usual signs of having been occupied by young birds.

44. *HYPHANTORNIS MARIQUENSIS* (Smith). Capricorn Weaver-bird.

The nests of these Weaver-birds are to be found on nearly every tree overhanging the river; their eggs vary greatly from cream-colour not spotted to greenish thickly spotted with reddish brown.

[The specimens sent by Mr. Symonds appear to me to belong to the larger and duller-coloured race of *H. velatus*, which should probably be referred to *Ploceus mariquensis* of Smith, as to which see Captain Shelley's remarks at p. 31 of the present volume.—J. H. G.]

45. *ESTRELLA ASTRILD* (Linn.). Common Waxbill.

This species is very common here; the stripe over the eye is a most brilliant vermilion during life.

46. *URÆGINTHUS GRANATINUS* (Linn.). Granadine Waxbill.

These beautiful birds I have only seen in the winter, when they occur in flocks with other Waxbills, feeding on seeds &c. along the river-banks.

The violet on the cheeks is most brilliant and bright during life, flashing in the sun if seen in a proper light.

47. *CRITHAGRA ICTERA* (Vicill.). Golden-rumped Seed-eaters.

These birds are generally found in flocks in the winter with the Waxbills.

48. *MACRONYX CAPENSIS* (Linn.). Sentinel Pipit.

These Pipits are very plentiful all over this district; young pointers will frequently 'stand' them.

49. *CENA CAPENSIS* (Linn.). Long-tailed African Dove.

These Doves are very common all about the town of Kroonstad and the river. I have frequently tried to catch them alive, but although I am fairly successful with other birds, these were too cunning; no sort of live-trap that I know of will catch them, though they walk round and round and investigate it closely. They nest here, if the few sticks they put together can be called a nest.

50. *PTEROCLES NAMAQUA*, Gmel. Namaqua Sand Grouse.

These birds appear in flocks in the autumn, when the mealie-lands are cleared. The pair sent I shot together on 30th September: I think they had a nest, though I could not find it. In November I saw a pair and a young bird running with them.

51. *COTURNIX COMMUNIS*, Bonn. European Quail.

These Quails are always to be found about the mealie-lands in April, and occasionally one or two are found at other times of the year, but they are then less numerous.

52. *TURNIX LEPURANA* (Smith). Kurrichane Hemipode.

These birds are also found in the mealie-lands in April,

when the mealies are getting ripe, but I have never seen them at any other season; they are about as numerous as the Quails, and both species afford very good sport, but require a good dog to find them, as they lie very close.

53. *CURSORIUS RUFUS*, Gould. Burchell's Courser.

This Courser is very common here.

[Mr. Symonds did not send a specimen of this species.—
J. H. G.]

54. *CURSORIUS BICINCTUS*, Temm. South-African Double-banded Courser.

This species is also very common; I have found the remains of ants in the stomach.

55. *ÆGIALITIS TRICOLLARIS* (Vieill.). Three-collared Sand Plover.

These little birds are very numerous here, especially near water. On 25th October, 1885, I found a nest just on the side of the road, whilst driving, by noticing a Plover twisting round and scratching with great rapidity. My boy told me that it had a nest, but although I got out of the cart at once and kept my eye on the spot, it was some time before I really saw the nest, if a slight depression in the bare ground can be so called, though I was staring hard at it all the time. The two eggs which it contained were completely covered with dried droppings, little stones, sand, &c., which I had to remove before I could see them. I conclude the old bird was concealing the eggs by covering them with dry dung &c., and that this was the reason of the vigorous scratching.

56. *PORPHYRIO SMARAGDONOTUS*, Temm. Green-backed Porphyrio.

I think these birds are more plentiful than is generally supposed in the large grass-pans in the high veldt, but they are not easily seen, and if seen are difficult to get unless killed on the spot; they lie close and seem to creep away, never to be seen again.

57. *BOTAURUS STELLARIS*. Common Bittern.

The specimen sent is the first I have seen in this district.

58. *ARDEA CINEREA*, Linn. Common Heron.

These Herons are very common all over the district.

59. *HERODIAS ALBA* (Linn.). Great White Egret.

60. *HERODIAS INTERMEDIA* (Wagl.). Short-billed White Egret.

Both this and the preceding species are decidedly scarce here; they are only found about the pans in very wet seasons.

61. *IBIS ÆTHIOPICA*, Lath. Sacred Ibis.

This species is always seen in certain pans and vleys, sometimes in small flocks, but nine is the largest number I have seen here together.

62. *HYDROCHELIDON HYBRIDA* (Pall.). Whiskered Tern.

Four of these Terns were seen in the month of December 1884 at a large reed-pan near Kroonstad, of which the specimen sent is one. On two other occasions I have seen the same species on other pans, but think it must be scarce here. I know nothing of its habits further than that it incessantly flies round and skims over the water.

[The specimen sent is an adult bird in full breeding-dress.—J. H. G.]

63. *HYDROCHELIDON LEUCOPTERA* (Schinz). White-winged Black Tern.

The specimen sent was shot at the same time as that of the preceding species; it is very much more plentiful than the Whiskered Tern, which it resembles in its habits, though not so rapid in its flight.

[The specimen sent is in immature plumage.—J. H. G.]

64. *CASARCA CANA*. South-African Shell Duck.

These Ducks are not plentiful here; they appear to nest on the ground at some distance from the pans, and bring their young down to the water; the Boers catch them when quite young, in the veldt, and rear them, sometimes cutting their wings and keeping them tame about the house, so that they swim on the dams with the tame Ducks and Geese.

65. *THALASSORNIS LEUCONOTA*, Smith. White-backed Duck.

The specimen sent was shot on a pan in this district; I have only seen three or four specimens of this species, though I have done a good deal of Duck-shooting here.

66. *PLOTUS LEVAILLANTI*, Licht. African Darter.

There are always one or two Darters about the river close to Kroonstad, but I have only seen them singly, never in pairs; they sit on old dead stumps of trees over the water and dive with great ease, coming up with their heads just out of the water. For some reason or other they are very difficult to kill. From the specimen sent I took a freshly-killed yellow fish $9\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length.

[A few years since the Zoological Society of London possessed a living specimen of *Plotus levaillanti*, and also examples of *P. anhinga* and of *P. melanogaster*. Mr. Bartlett has been so good as to inform me that all three species, whilst under his observation, captured the living fishes on which they fed in the same manner, and that a peculiar one: the Darter always transfixed the fish on its sharp under mandible, from which it was subsequently tossed off and swallowed; a somewhat strenuous jerk was required to throw the fish off from the lower mandible which had transfixed it, owing to the tomæ of both mandibles being finely serrated.—J. H. G.]

XXXV.—*Notes on the Birds of Natal and adjoining parts of South Africa.* By HENRY SEEBOHM.

ALTHOUGH Natal is a very small country it embraces a wide range of climate, from the almost tropical coast, heated by the warm current of the Indian Ocean (which flows steadily from the equator), up to the temperate regions of the mountain valleys, five or six thousand feet above the level of the sea, at the foot of the Drakenberg range, which attain an elevation of eight to ten thousand feet. The character of the country varies also in other ways. The sugar-canes of Durban, the mealies (Indian corn) of Maritzberg, the bush